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# THE MECHANICS OF ORAL EXPRESSION

BY

HOWARD STANLEY SMITH, A.B., LL.B.



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DAYTON, OHIO  
PRESS OF THE GRONEWEG PRINTING CO.  
1921

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To my wife, Carrie Herbig Smith, who on the  
fifth day of February, nineteen hundred and twenty,  
departed a life of uplifting service, this book is  
dedicated.



## FORWARD.

A good speaker, provided he has something of interest to talk about, possesses the power to command attention. Leadership in many lines is asserted through the capacity of a person to speak in a clear, direct and forceful manner. The sharp, distinct command of an officer of the line secures a ready response from his men; while the indistinct utterance of an important order may lead to confusion in its execution.

In the shop, the man at the bench or machine who can give an order to others with sufficient force and clearness to inspire its efficient execution, has one of the essential qualities of a good foreman. The added power of being able to speak knowledgeably and convincingly to the president or board of directors about such important matters as economy and efficiency of production, is one of the marks of executive ability which, if properly developed, may secure for him who possesses it, a manager's position.

The writer has sought, by mechanical and other examples, to bring out clearly and forcibly for the engineer, artisan, business man and salesman, those fundamental rules of public speaking which are most effective at the present day. His wide experience as a patent attorney and as an instructor in a municipal Y. M. C. A. Institute, has given him a splendid opportunity to ascertain the needs of the engineer, business man and others in the way of a short and comprehensive treatise on the mechanics of oral expression.

The voice mechanism, like any other important machine, is constructed on scientific lines, and must be kept in proper condition at all times to render the most effective service. Equally important is its method of operation, which must conform to certain rules regarding speed, rests and other principles that will be brought out in the book. The power or force of the spoken word is largely dependent upon the proper observance of these rules, which will be simply stated and effectively illustrated by mechanical and other comparisons and examples.



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## CHAPTER I.

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### THE VOICE MECHANISM

As one needs to study the explosive engine to understand the most common propelling means of an automobile, so must the voice mechanism be examined closely to ascertain how the power of human utterance is developed. The sound which issues from the lips is not the effect of one cause any more than is the force which impels the piston of an explosive engine. It is the product of the lungs, the voice box and many other organs of the human body, just as the power which drives the piston is developed by the carbureter, the storage battery and other parts of an automobile.

Sound is produced by the vibration imparted to elastic bodies by different mediums. In the human voice the elements that are set in motion to produce sound, are the vocal cords or ligaments that respond freely to the exciting force, which is air. As air is drawn into the carbureter of an explosive engine during the suction stroke of the piston, so is air drawn into the human lungs by the inspirational act of breathing.

### THE LUNGS

The lungs are two elastic bodies of conical shape that receive air from the bronchial tubes. They are set in two lateral cavities of the chest and have broad concave bases that rest upon the diaphragm. During the inspirational act of breathing, the capacity of the chest cavities is so expanded that air will rush into them through the bronchial tubes to fill the vacuum created in the air cells of the lungs, just as it rushes into a carbureter on the inlet stroke of the piston.

The lungs will not function properly unless they are properly developed and cared for. The practice of taking long and deep breaths in the fresh air is to be encouraged. Pure air is as essential to the proper development of the lungs as distilled water or pure rain water is to the life of a storage battery. It is a well known fact that if water free from impurities is not frequently added to a storage battery, the plates will sulphate or harden in much the same manner that tubercles will form in the lungs if they are not given proper care. Therefore, physical exercise in the open air should be regularly carried on to insure bodily health and vigor, as well as to produce strong air currents for the proper vibration of the sound producing vocal cords.

### THE DIAPHRAGM

The enlargement of the chest cavity to permit the lungs to receive air, and the subsequent diminution of that cavity to expel the air from those organs, is largely due to a dome-shaped muscle known as the diaphragm. The latter forms the floor of the chest, which is convex until it contracts, when it becomes nearly a plane figure. During inspiration, the contraction of the diaphragm, accompanied by the expansion of the walls of the chest, creates in the chest cavity a vacuum that causes oxygen-laden air to rush in and fill the lungs in much the same manner that the gasoline-laden air is drawn into the cylinder of an explosive engine to fill the space above the piston when the latter descends on its suction stroke. Then, when the diaphragm relaxes during respiration, it will exert an upward force which, plus that effected by the contraction of the walls of the chest, will expel the foul air from the lungs in a manner similar to the expulsion of the exhaust gases from the cylinder of an explosive engine during the upward movement of the piston.

A speaker who desires his words to be clear, forceful and distinct, should expand and contract his chest from the waist up, for then the abdominal and other muscles will so co-operate with the diaphragm during the breathing operations that the

chest cavity will be enlarged and diminished along all of its diameters. The lungs, therefore, will receive and give out their maximum charge of air.

### THE VOCAL CORDS

There is no better instance of the way nature makes use of its by-products than that furnished by the employment of the air which the lungs expel, for the purpose of setting in action the voice mechanism. This stream of what might become wasted air, gives to the human body one of its most wonderful powers—that of oral expression.

The air currents as they are sent forth from the lungs, are conducted by a tube called the trachea or wind pipe, to the larynx—a cartilaginous box that is approximately triangular in shape and which terminates at its front portion in a ridge popularly known as "Adam's Apple." Connected across the middle portion of this cartilaginous structure are two membranous ligaments between which is left a chink or slit running from front to rear.

The vocal cords, when at rest, are wrinkled and devoid of tension, but when struck by a current of air expelled from the lungs, they are put under sufficient tension for vibration. The degree of tension under which they may be placed, and the intensity of the force of the air currents played upon them, will determine the character of the sound which they will produce. Like two cat-gut strings disposed across a relatively triangular box, the vocal cords will produce a high note when, under great tension, they are struck by air currents, and a note lower in pitch when that tension is relaxed.

### MODIFICATION OF THE SOUNDS PRODUCED BY THE VOCAL CORDS

As steel ingots when they come from the molds, need to be forged and machined into finished mechanical parts, so must the sounds produced by the vocal cords, be formed and shaped in their passage through the mouth and nose to convert them into clear, distinct and forceful parts of speech.

The manner of changing the intensity of a current of electricity, in many of its aspects, bears a close relation to the modification of the sound currents in their passage through the human mouth. By adjusting the aperture between the lips, or by projecting the tongue or teeth into the path of the expiratory air currents from the lungs, we can modify these currents as readily and effectively as we can vary the intensity of electric currents by interposing the graduated resistance of a rheostat or other regulating device in the circuit through which they pass.

### THE VOWELS

The vowel sounds, which are continuous so long as respiration can be sustained, require but slight modification in their passage through the mouth, and should be permitted to die away gradually. In other words, the vowels, which are represented the letters *a*, *e*, *i*, *o* and *u*, and sometimes *w* and *y*, and their combinations, require practically no resistance other than that offered by the form of aperture between the lips, to distinguish them from one another. It will be noticed that the mouth is opened wider, and the lips are drawn back farther when the vowel sound *ah* is uttered than when the vowel sound *u* is given.

As a storage battery should not be permitted to attain a state of complete discharge, so should the lungs, which are the bellows for the voice, never be entirely emptied of air. The vowel sounds, in particular, will be uttered more smoothly, and with less fatigue, if a fresh breath is taken before all of the previously inspired air has been completely expelled from the lungs. The vowel sounds, being continuous, should not begin too abruptly, nor end too suddenly; and when these sounds neither begin nor end a word, they should blend into the sounds that precede or follow them.

### THE CONSONANTS

The consonants are sounds which are produced by bringing such organs as the tongue and teeth into the path of the air

currents during their passage through the mouth, just as an induction coil is inserted in an electric circuit to increase the pressure or voltage of the current. The consonant sounds cannot be said to have the volume of the vowels any more than the induced electric currents can be said to have the watts of the primary currents; but the force with which the air currents are expelled, is momentarily increased to enable them to issue rapidly through the small aperture between the lips, tongue and teeth to produce the consonants, just as the pressure of the electric current is increased by the induction coil to enable it to jump the air gap between the electrodes of a spark plug in an explosive engine.

### THE EXPLOSIVE CONSONANTS

“Explosive,” therefore, seems to be the word that will best define the principal class to which the consonants belong. Among these explosive consonants are the sounds *p*, *b*, *t* and *d*, which begin and end abruptly, as in the words “paint,” “bill,” “tool” and “die.”

Take, for example, the letters *p* and *b* which, because they are formed by the interruption of the air currents by the lips, are called labials. To utter *p* and *d* sounds, as in “pin” and “box,” the pressure of the air currents is momentarily increased behind the closed lips, just as the electrical pressure is momentarily increased behind the air gap in a spark plug. The compressed air is then suddenly released by a quick opening of the lips to produce the explosive sound.

It is necessary, therefore, in order to utter the explosive consonants forcibly and distinctly, to accumulate the air currents momentarily behind the lips in the case of the labials *p* and *b*; behind the tip of the tongue and the teeth in the case of the dentals *t* and *d*, and at the root of the tongue in the case of the gutterals *k* and *g*, until there is sufficient air pressure developed to utter these sounds in an explosive manner.

Similarly, air should be momentarily compressed behind the tongue and teeth when the consonant sound *th* is uttered.

Foreigners, particularly, have much difficulty in uttering this sound. They usually substitute the dental "d" for the "th" sound in such words as "the," "this," "that" and "those." If one would always remember to project the tongue beyond the teeth before uttering the "th" sound, and then draw the tongue inwardly as the air pressure behind the tongue is released, that sound can be readily and correctly produced.

### THE SEMI-EXPLOSIVE CONSONANTS

When the air currents that pass through the mouth are momentarily put under pressure, and then gradually released, the semi-explosive consonants *f*, *v*, *s*, *sh*, and *r* are properly uttered. For instance, when those air currents, upon release, are caused to issue through a small opening between the teeth, the aspirate *s* is produced; and when they escape continuously, but not explosively, through a small opening between the lips, the sounds *f* and *v* are formed. Words in which these letters are the initial ones, appear in the following sentence:

"Sentiment favors the victor."

### THE NASALS

The nasals are those sounds which are formed when the air currents pass partly through the nose and partly through the mouth. These sounds, which are represented by the letters *m* and *n* and the combination *ng*, are in the nature of continuous consonants, since they do not require the momentary storage of pressure behind them, and come forth, not in an explosive or semi-explosive manner, but gradually and smoothly like the vowels.

I would, therefore, divide the principal consonants into the following classes:

First, those consonants which are exposives, in that they require a momentary accumulation and release of air currents to form them. Such consonants as *p*, *b*, *t*, *d*, *k* and *th* would properly belong to this class.

Second, those consonants such as *f*, *v*, *s*, *sh*, and *r*, which

are semi-explosive in their nature, in that the air currents are momentarily put under pressure and then gradually released to produce them.

Third, such consonants as *m*, *n* and *ng*, which are continuous in their nature, since they do not begin suddenly nor end abruptly, resembling the vowels in all respects except that the air currents pass partly through the nose instead of entirely through the mouth.

## CHAPTER II.

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### RESTING PLACES

For its successful operation, the voice mechanism requires frequent and adequate rests. Human beings and inanimate objects derive from frequent rest periods, a lubricant that makes them more efficient and prolongs their lives. Lord Kelvin demonstrated that iron wires kept in constant motion throughout the week, act quite differently after a Sunday's rest.

Resting places during a speech or address fulfill a two-fold purpose; they enable one to avoid fatigue, and they make more emphatic the words which one utters. It may be well to say in this connection, that in reading aloud from a printed or written article, the resting places do not always occur at the places indicated by the punctuation marks. Since the voice requires more frequent rests than the eye, it may be proper to pause one or more times between punctuation marks. In the following sentence taken from an address by Mr. Charles F. Kettering on the "Future of the Aeroplane Industry," there is no punctuation mark save the period, and no other is needed.

"I believe that the Lord will not tolerate much longer our throwing away 90% of the useful work in a gallon of gasoline."

The eye can readily take in the meaning conveyed by that sentence without the assistance of a comma placed between "longer" and "our," but when the sentence is uttered aloud, the speaker can take a full breath before its conclusion, and make that which follows the word "longer" more emphatic, by pausing before the word "our."

The rule for selecting resting places for the voice during a speech or an address, can be stated as follows:

A speaker may properly pause to breathe, before those parts of a sentence that should be made emphatic.

The omission of the word "and" in a sentence is nearly always the signal for a pause. Accordingly, where there are a number of important words which one desires to utter in succession without using the word "and" between them, a pause before each one of those words will properly emphasize it. Let us take for illustration, the following part of a proclamation delivered by General Allenby to the people of Jerusalem upon his first official entry into that city after its capture by the British in 1917.

"I make it known to you that every sacred building, monument, holy spot, shrine, traditional site, endowment, pious bequest, or customary place of prayer of whatsoever form of the three religions will be maintained according to the existing customs and beliefs of those to whose faith they are sacred."

By pausing before "monument," "holy spot," "shrine," "traditional site," "endowment," "pious bequest," "or customary place of prayer" and "will be maintained," the above sentence may be spoken in a very emphatic manner.

A salesman can make particular use of the pause in a demonstration of the article which he sells. The following excerpt from the "N. C. R. Selling Plan" can be most effectively presented by pausing at the places indicated by the wide spaces between the words:

"The printed receipt and the original and duplicate sales slip with printed register figures of the sale will prevent forgotten charges, prevent disputes with customers, protect children and servants, protect your good will, the influence of your trade, and the good name of your help."

By pausing for a short period at each one of the places indicated, a salesman will be able orally to separate each point from the other, thereby enabling a prospective purchaser the better to take in the meaning of each advantage of the printed receipt. On the other hand, if no pauses are observed, all of those points will run together as in a blurred picture, and the salesman will have wasted his effort in presenting them.

In scientific addresses by engineers, doctors and other professional men, a generous use of the pause will help the audience the more readily to comprehend complex and technical data. For instance, by observing the pauses indicated when stating Newton's general law of gravitation, one's auditors will better comprehend its meaning than if the different clauses were not so separated.

"Every particle in the solar system attracts every other particle with a force which is proportional to the product of their masses and which varies inversely as the square of their distances apart."

Thus it will be observed that it is very important to select resting places in reading or speaking, not only to relieve the voice of fatigue, but to enable one's auditors more easily and understandingly to take in the meaning of the thoughts conveyed by the words which are uttered. For the same reason that a gun when given a short rest between shots, will work with greater efficiency, one should, in speaking, rest or pause frequently to take a breath, thereby avoiding fatigue and preparing the minds of the hearers to receive the statement which is to follow.

## CHAPTER III.

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### FORCE

The successful operation of the voice mechanism is also largely dependent upon that quality in an individual which we call "force." Force may be said to be the energy of utterance. As in coal and gas we find the latent energy that is transformed into the driving power of steam, so in man there is present a latent force which, by proper development, may be translated into the compelling power of speech and personality.

In public speaking, force is not measured by loudness and excessive gesture any more than the driving power of an engine is manifested by noise and vibration. Force in man is developed by wholesome, intensive and purposeful living, and is expressed chiefly through personality. When one meets a forceful man, even though he remains silent, one is at once struck with the gripping power of his presence. Then, when the force of personality is placed behind the power of expression, one adds greatly to the influence that may be exerted by the possession of this quality.

Great public speakers, even though they may differ in style of composition and manner of delivery, have one striking trait in common, and that is force. The late Theodore Roosevelt was perhaps the most forceful man of modern times, because of his steadfast purpose and intensive effort to develop morally, mentally and physically for unstinted service to his fellow man.

From no greater teacher than the late Theodore Roosevelt can one learn the lesson of the compelling power of force in

modern public speaking. To use a slang expression, his speeches "bristled with pep," or as another would state it, "they had the kick in them." To a style of composition that could hardly be excelled, he added a strikingly forceful delivery.

The following paragraph, taken from the last public statement of Theodore Roosevelt, and read to The American Defense Society on the eve of his death, is intensely forceful and patriotic:

"We have room for but one flag, the American flag, and this excludes the red flag, which symbolizes all wars against liberty and civilization just as much as it excludes any foreign flag of a nation to which we are hostile. We have room for but one language here, and that is the English language, for we intend to see that the crucible turns our people out as Americans, of American nationality and not as dwellers in a polyglot boarding house, and we have room but for one soul loyalty, and that is loyalty to the American people."

### ARGUMENT

Force in argument is the power that one has to move another to conviction. To cultivate it one must put behind his words sufficient nervous energy and physical vigor to persuade or convince. The personal magnetism of great debaters like Daniel Webster and Edmund Burke was so appealing as frequently to compel strangers passing one of them on the street, to turn around and exclaim, "There goes a great man."

The business man can acquire the compelling power of force by enthusiastically and efficiently promoting his business; the engineer can cultivate it by studiously and conscientiously applying himself to his chosen line; and the artisan can develop it by vigorously and intelligently performing the task at hand. By thus acquiring force, the business man, engineer and artisan are storing up sufficient power and energy to make their words carry conviction in conversation and public address.

The person who is enthusiastically awake to his opportu-

nities, and is continuously on the job developing them, is not going to let his auditors go to sleep when he talks to them. Force, more than any other quality in a speaker, will hold open the eyelids of his hearers to make them alert to catch the message which he has to give them. As a magnet throws out its little lines of force to attract another body to it, so a forceful speaker, through his mental alertness and physical vigor, attracts and holds the attention of his auditors.

Force, like an explosive behind a shell, may differ in kind and degree. In argumentation, particularly where a speaker desires to move an audience to conviction on an issue of great importance, the maximum amount of force should be applied in an explosive manner, to those words which express the principal points of the argument. Demosthenes put all the force of his energetic personality into the "Oration on the Crown," because it required a supreme effort on his part to demolish the mountain of abuse heaped upon him by a rival.

The hostile mob that greeted Henry Ward Beecher in Liverpool during the Civil War, was in a great measure calmed, and convinced of the justice of the cause of the North, by his superbly forceful speech, of which the following is a striking part:

"And now in the future it is the work of every good man and patriot not to create divisions, but to do things that will make for peace. On our own part it shall be done. On your part it ought to be done; and when in any of the convulsions that come upon the world, Great Britain finds herself struggling single-handed against the gigantic powers that spread oppression and darkness, there ought to be such cordiality that she can turn and say to her first born and illustrious child, 'Come!' I will not say that England cannot, again, as hitherto, single-handed, manage any power, but I will say that England and America, together for religion and liberty, are a match for the world."

The above paragraph is a splendid one to utter aloud for the practice it gives in the application of force.

## NARRATION AND DESCRIPTION

Force in a more restrained degree is required in narration and description, for in speeches which relate and describe there is not so much at stake as in those which seek to persuade and convince. The more force with which we can drive home our points in a sale, lawsuit or any other matter requiring a decision, the more likely we shall be to receive it. In narration and description, where we are principally concerned with events that have passed and decisions which have been made, a more limited or moderate degree of force is appropriate. Force should never be slighted, however, but should be applied in a degree that is suited to the subject and the occasion.

Throughout the entire range of history there is no better example of a calmly forceful address than that delivered by Abraham Lincoln at the dedication of Gettysburg Cemetery. The unparalleled force of his simple, plain, Anglo-Saxon sentences setting forth the advantages of liberty and equality, seemed to take renewed hold upon the free peoples of the world during the great European War, and impelled them to fight, as never before, that the blessings of Democracy might "not perish from the earth." This address, which is given below, ought to be read aloud frequently for the splendid practice it will give the reader in public speaking.

"Four score and seven years ago our fathers brought forth upon this continent a new nation, conceived in liberty, and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal. Now we are engaged in a great civil war, testing whether that nation, or any nation so conceived and so dedicated, can long endure.

"We are met on a great battlefield of that war. We have met to dedicate a portion of it as the final resting place of those who here gave their lives that that nation might live. It is altogether fitting and proper that we should do this. But in a larger sense we cannot dedicate, we cannot consecrate, we cannot hallow this ground. The brave men, living and dead, who struggled here have consecrated it far beyond our power to add or detract.

The world will little note, nor long remember, what we say here; but it can never forget what they did here.

"It is for us, the living, rather to be dedicated to the unfinished work that they have thus far so nobly carried on. It is rather for us to be here dedicated to the great task remaining before us; that from these honored dead we take increased devotion to that cause for which they here gave the last full measure of devotion; that we here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain; that this nation shall, under God, have a new birth of freedom, and that the government of the people, by the people, and for the people, shall not perish from the earth."

More than fifty years later, after another decisive battle of the world's history, that great English Orator and Statesman, David Lloyd George, at the citadel of Verdun, re-echoed the sentiments of Lincoln's Gettysberg Address when, with much force, he said:

"The memory of the victorious resistance of Verdun will be immortal, because Verdun saved not only France, but the whole of the great cause which is common to ourselves and humanity. The evil working force of the enemy has broken itself against the heights around this old citadel as an angry sea breaks upon a granite rock. These heights have conquered the storm which threatened the world.

"I am deeply moved when I tread this sacred soil, and I do not speak for myself alone. I bring to you a tribute of the admiration of my country, of the great empire which I represent here. They bow with me before your sacrifice and before your glory. Once again, for the defense of the great causes with which its very future is bound up, mankind turns to France."

Force is the effectiveness with which words are spoken, whether their purpose be to convince, narrate or describe. The business man who, in an energetic and vigorous manner, exclaims: "My goods are built on honor," will do immeasurably more toward convincing another of the truth of that

statement than if he were to utter it in an unconcerned and listless way.

Force is electric in its influence and gripping in its power. It impels and moves men to conviction and action; and holds their attention and interest when instruction and entertainment, and not action, are the ends in view.

## CHAPTER IV.

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### CLEARNESS

The power developed by the speech mechanism can best be transmitted to others by shafts of simple, clear and forceful English. Clearness is that quality in a speaker's style and delivery that enables the hearer to absorb readily and accurately the meaning of his words. This is accomplished chiefly by the use of clear, strong and simple English. Language, like gesture, must not attract attention to itself, but should be the medium of conveying ideas to others in such a way that they will not think of the words at all.

Abraham Lincoln's language, noted for its simplicity and clearness, conveyed his great thoughts to millions whom the high-sounding words of other speakers failed to reach. How clear and simple, and how beautiful and forceful, are the concluding words of his second inaugural:

“With malice toward none, with charity for all, with firmness in the right as God gives us to see the right, let us strive on to finish the work we are in, to bind up the nation's wounds, to care for him who shall have borne the battle, and for his widow and his orphan, to do all which may achieve and cherish a just and lasting peace among ourselves and with all nations.”

### SIMPLE WORDS

It is well to avoid the use of large and strange words in a selling talk. An adding machine salesman, instead of saying:

"The accuracy with which our machine performs its adding functions will astonish you," can convey that meaning with greater brevity and clearness by saying: "Our machine adds correctly at all times."

One runs a great risk in making a sweeping statement like the first, for a prospective purchaser may not understand it; he may look upon it as exceedingly boastful, or he may believe that you think he has never heard of an adding machine.

In the second instance, you make a clear-cut, simple and positive statement of what the machine will do without placing upon the prospective purchaser an additional burden of stopping to figure out the meaning of the words used. It is proper to use simple words that everyone can understand, for then a prospective purchaser will be able to take in readily and accurately the meaning of what is said without thinking of the words at all.

### SHORT SENTENCES

Clearness in public speaking is also attained by the use of short sentences, which, like simple words, are readily understood. The short sentence conveys one idea at a time, with ample pause at the beginning and the end to enable the mind to absorb its meaning. The long sentence, on the other hand, requires a sustained effort on the part of the hearer to grasp its import.

All sentences should not be short, however, for they would give a jerky form of expression. Long sentences, therefore, should be used as a sort of lubricant with the short ones to make the speech or conversation free from the harsh or grating effect that too frequent pauses would give.

In a selling talk, there is no better way to present clearly and effectively the points one desires to make, than by the use of short sentences in connection with just enough long ones to avoid the effect of jerkiness. The following appeal of an advertising solicitor shows the free use of the short sentence. It will be noted that a moderately long sentence fre-

quently follows one or more short ones to give smoothness to the whole.

“Mr. Jones: Your concern has the reputation of rarely losing a customer. The excellence of your products accounts for that. To find more users for you to satisfy is my business. With that end in view I desire to bring forcibly to your attention the value of the publication which I represent, as an advertising medium.

“Our circulation is largely among contractors. They are extensive users of your products. Home builders, too, in an ever increasing number, are becoming regular subscribers to our ‘Building News’ magazine.

“We believe that the placing of your advertisement in the ‘Building News’ will rapidly increase your business. All but a very few of our subscribers are purchasers of products in your line. Having satisfied the users to whom you have sold for years, why not increase the number of such users by advertising in the ‘Building News’.”

In scientific addresses, particularly to non-technical audiences, clearness should be one of the principal aims of the speaker. This can best be effected by the frequent use of simple words and short sentences. Professor Michael Faraday in his famous lecture on the “Chemical History of a Candle,” spoke clearly and forcibly when he said:

“You remember that when a candle burns badly it produces smoke; but if it is burning well, there is no smoke. And you know that the brightness of the candle is due to this smoke which becomes ignited. Here is an experiment to prove this. So long as the smoke remains in the flame of the candle and becomes ignited, it gives a beautiful light, and never appears to us in the form of black particles.”

A clear presentation of a highly technical subject is quite an art. It ought to be cultivated by every speaker who addresses an assembly composed largely of non-technical hearers; otherwise they will waste their time in listening to language they do not understand.

## CHAPTER V.

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### RAPIDITY OF UTTERANCE

The rate at which the voice mechanism should be operated is a subject of much importance in public speaking. It is well known that an engine will run slower under a heavy load than under a light one, provided the amount of power delivered to it remains the same. Similarly in speaking, rapidity of utterance is controlled largely by the weight and importance of the subject matter talked about. One hardly would expect to hear the words, "This is a grave and critical period," uttered as rapidly as the words, "Today we shall enjoy ourselves."

When the subject matter of a speech or address is of such great importance that many of the words to be used by a speaker have been weighed and thought over by him beforehand, they should be uttered slowly and deliberately to achieve the result they are intended to accomplish. It is difficult to believe that Lincoln ever spoke more slowly and deliberately than when he uttered the following words in his first inaugural:

"I am loath to close. We are not enemies, but friends. We must not be enemits. Though passion may have strained, it must not break our bonds of affection. The mystic chords of memory, stretching from every battle-field and patriot grave to every living heart and hearth-stone all over this broad land, will yet swell the chorus of Union, when again touched, as surely they will be, by the better angels of our nature."

Occasions of great gravity and importance call for a slow and deliberate delivery, because it exhibits a proper respect on

the part of the speaker for the seriousness of the subject discussed and begets the confidence and close attention of the auditors.

### THE MODERATELY RAPID RATE

Except when presenting a matter of unusual importance to an individual or a group of persons, a business man is not expected—indeed he cannot afford—to take the time to speak in a slow manner. Accordingly, he may increase his rate of delivery, provided he does not sacrifice clearness in so doing. A moderately rapid speaker is usually a forceful speaker; and if a salesman or other business man can speak distinctly while speaking rapidly, he will add to what he has to say, a degree of force which a slow speaker seldom exhibits.

In view of what has been said, it is recommended that a moderately rapid rate of expression be employed in speaking upon all ordinary matters of business, provided the words are spoken in a clear and distinct manner, and pauses are made at the proper places. Frequent resting places are more necessary where the rate is fairly rapid, than in the case of a slow delivery, since voice fatigue and lack of clearness are apt to be greater where pauses are not observed.

The order of an executive can be made very effective when delivered in a fairly rapid and vigorous manner. The following order should be so uttered:

“All employes of this plant are directed to put forth their best efforts to finish the government contract on time.”

One should not give such an order in any other than a moderately rapid and vigorous manner, for if one expects an order to be expeditiously and efficiently carried out, he should give it in an energetic way.

A salesman shoud bear in mind that, in an approach and demonstration, he must conserve the time of the prospective purchaser as well as his own. Accordingly, he ought so to gauge his rate of utterance as to present to the prospective

purchaser the greatest number of points possible in the time at his disposal, without sacrificing any of his power of persuasion or conviction in so doing.

In the first place, a moderately rapid rate of utterance will compliment the prospective purchaser, for it will make him feel that the salesman realizes the value of his time. In the second place, a vigorous, energetic and forceful appeal will be more apt to convince the prospective purchaser of the need of the article in question, than a slow, reserved and time-taking description of its qualities. And in the third place, the salesman will be able to cover more ground in a selling talk when a moderately rapid rate of utterance is employed, provided his words are spoken distinctly and are separated by frequent pauses.

In a scientific address, except at those places where important technical data is being presented, a moderately rapid rate of utterance is appropriate. The principal reason why so many scientific lectures or addresses appear to drag, is because the speaker has a slow delivery and fails to put sufficient force and vigor behind his words to make them gripping. A frequent use of the simile, or of comparisons with known things, will make technical data and figures more interesting, than by a mere recitation of the facts and figures themselves. For illustration, it is better to say at a moderately rapid rate "that it would take a train traveling 60 miles an hour, without stopping, 178 years to reach the sun," than to say slowly "that the sun is 92,900,000 miles away."

## CHAPTER VI.

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### CHANGE OF TONE

“We progress through change” is one of the mottoes of a great factory. This motto has a striking application to the art of public speaking, for a speaker who does not frequently change his tone, will not succeed in holding the attention of an audience.

Nothing is more tiresome than to listen to a person present a subject in a monotone. It is like traveling across a weary desert, with nothing to see but the seemingly unending waste.

A salesman needs to vary his tone to hold the attention of a prospective purchaser. He will do well to change it frequently, for nothing will add more to the effectiveness of the approach and demonstration than versatility.

A talk given without change of tone is like a picture painted in one color; it will not have the attractive qualities of one on which a variety of colors is used. It, therefore, behooves a speaker to vary his tones as a painter changes his colors.

### THE LOW TONE

The low tone is the proper one to use in speaking upon a subject of great gravity and importance. For example, such a statement as:

“The rapidly decreasing business of this company demands your earnest consideration,”

is sufficiently serious to warrant its utterance in a deep tone by an officer who makes it to a board of directors.

An insurance agent may use a low tone in making the following statement to a prospective risk:

“This policy will not only afford protection to your family in the event you die, but it will be an investment from which you will derive profit while you live.”

### THE MODERATE TONE

In ordinary conversation and the usual business discourse, a more moderate tone is appropriate. In a moderate tone one business man may say to another:

“I hope you will accept my proposition, for I believe it would benefit both of us.”

### HIGH DEGREE OF PITCH

Extreme pleasure or gratification is usually expressed on the higher degrees of pitch. For example, emphasis may be given to the following statement by delivering it upon a high degree of pitch:

“In view of the splendid business which we did last year, our directors are happy to announce that a 10% dividend has been declared on the common stock.”

### INFLECTION

Inflection, or the tone curve from one degree of pitch to another, is a subject that deserves considerable attention. This tone curve should rise or fall in accordance with definite rules, for a rising inflection, or a falling inflection, improperly used, reduces the force of the utterance.

Speakers who apply the rising inflection to every statement, fall into the offensive sing-song habit; while those who continuously use the falling inflection, err almost as much in the other direction.

### THE RISING INFLECTION

The rising inflection, or upward tone curve, should be employed in asking questions requiring "yes" or "no" for an answer, and in making statements that are not positive or decisive in character.

this?" may be  
accept  
to  
going  
you

The question, "Are

answered by "yes" or "no," and therefore, as indicated by the upward curve, requires the rising inflection. In other words, the tone of the voice should be higher at the end, than at the beginning of the sentence.

Furthermore, in cases where the mind is not fully made up as to a course of action, the rising inflection should be employed.

machine", requires  
that  
buy  
to  
hope

The statement, "I

the rising inflection, since the one making it has not fully made up his mind as to his course of action.

### THE FALLING INFLECTION

On the other hand, if the statement were:

"I  
will  
buy  
that  
machine",

then the falling inflection

would best express its decisive character; that is, the voice should fall at the end of the sentence.

Resolve or determination also is best expressed by the use of the falling inflection. The statement:

“Our  
company  
is  
determined  
to  
give  
high  
grade  
service”,

calls for the falling inflection to make it emphatic.

The downward tone curve adds more force and carries more conviction than the rising one. It, therefore, should be used whenever the impression of positiveness is to be conveyed. A coffee salesman who, using the falling inflection, says:

“Our  
coffee  
has  
a  
distinctive

flavor”, will be more apt to convince a prospective purchaser of the truth of that statement than one who uses a rising tone in making it.

In speaking, the falling inflection adds force to a declarative or positive statement, just as in Physics, gravity supplies the impelling force to a descending body. Conviction is carried by the downward tone curve, and particularly is this so in Salesmanship. By employing the falling inflection, an automobile salesman may make emphatic every sentence of the following appeal to a prospective purchaser:

“Our car is noted for its artistic design and perfect workmanship. Its most important part, the motor, is practically noiseless in operation and simple in construction. Motors long in use in our machines, supply the best evidence of their lasting qualities. The gears, bearings, shafts, axles, wheels, and, in fact, all parts of the machine, are made by expert workmen from selected material. You will make no mistake in purchasing one of our cars.”

## CHAPTER VII.

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### APPEAL TO THE EYE THROUGH PICTURES

In addition to the mechanical elements which the body itself supplies for oral expression, there are certain outside means which may be employed to reinforce the spoken word.

It is an old adage that "pictures speak louder than words." But when pictures and words are used together to convey thoughts, we have a combination that is strikingly effective in its appeal.

However, the spoken word and the picture must not be employed haphazardly, for one may neutralize or destroy the effect of the other. In order to be effective, their presentation must be in proper sequence, and conform to certain rules. For instance, a picture that is thrown upon the screen a long time before or after the spoken words concerning it, are uttered, will fail to make a related appeal to the eye and the ear of the auditor.

The following rules are recommended for a speaker to observe when using a stereoptican or moving picture machine to illustrate his remarks.

### THE TIME FOR SHOWING THE PICTURE

It is quite important that the picture illustrating the subject talked about, be thrown upon the screen at the proper time. Since the appeal to the eye is stronger than the appeal to the ear, the picture ought to be exhibited as a powerful climax to the speaker's words. Therefore, it is advisable in most instances, first to describe the subject, and immediately thereafter to have the picture illustrating it, exhibited. In

this way the auditors are preparing to understand and enjoy the picture without being required to wait for a subsequent explanation of it.

By way of illustration, let it be assumed that a lecturer who is talking upon a travel subject has for exhibition a picture of a beautiful mountain scene in Colorado. If the hearers were not told in advance the subject of this picture, they would not know what it was until after it was exhibited: On the other hand, if the speaker should tell them that the next picture would be a photograph of an attractive mountain slope in Colorado, and describe in advance some of its striking characteristics, they would be prepared to look for and appreciate the beautiful features of the scene without having their view of it interrupted by his words during its exhibition. If the preliminary explanation of it is complete, the picture will speak for itself when it is displayed.

Again, a speaker on community welfare work may arouse the expectancy of his audience in a striking picture on the slums, by giving an oral outline of it before it is shown. Then, when the picture is thrown upon the screen, his hearers may give it their undivided attention. In other words,

the picture will have more force if it is the climax of, and not the introduction to, the speaker's words; that is, the appeal to the ear, except in some instances, should precede the appeal to the eye.

#### **TALKING DURING THE EXHIBITION OF THE PICTURE**

In those cases where the speaker finds it necessary to talk during the exhibition of a picture, he should face the audience as much as possible so that his words will be distinctly heard. In scientific lectures, when the picture of an instrument or apparatus is being shown, it may be necessary for the speaker to point out certain features which would go unobserved if he did not point them out during the exhibition of it. But, if while pointing out these features, he faces the picture instead of the audience, many persons will be unable to hear what he has to say about it. A speaker ought to become so familiar with the

subject to the picture, that he can point out its important features without diminishing the audibility of his spoken words. Too many speakers talk more to the picture than to the audience, with the result that their explanatory words are more or less wasted because they are not heard in every part of the auditorium.

For the above reasons, it is better that a speaker should refrain from talking at all during the exhibition of a picture if, when talking, he causes a strained effort on the part of his auditors to hear him. Whenever it is possible, pictures should be used that contain printed words explaining features which cannot well be described beforehand. The appeal will then be entirely to the eye while the picture is being shown. But in those cases where this cannot be done, the speaker should be so familiar with the subject of the picture that, when he talks about it during its exhibition, the audience will hear every word that he says.

In this connection, it is well to say that a speaker should not talk to the floor during the exhibition of the picture, or at any other time, for his words will not bounce out to the audience any more than they will rebound to it when they are directed to the picture behind him.

### USE OF THE POINTER

In scientific lectures, and addresses involving the use of pictures containing unmarked features that might go unobserved if they were not pointed out during the exhibition of the picture, it is proper for a speaker to use a pointer for this purpose. For example, during a lecture on the erosion of metals, the speaker may exhibit a picture showing the effects of erosion upon a gas engine cylinder. By the use of a pointer, the speaker may point out to the audience the places in the cylinder where the erosion has occurred, thus enabling those who are partly or wholly unfamiliar with the subject, to see at once just what the effects of erosion are.

The speaker should not use the pointer in a way that will

attract the attention of the audience to the pointer rather than to the features of the picture which he desires to bring out by it. Therefore, the speaker should not play with the pointer; nor should he scrape it upon the floor or screen. Instead, he should hold it firmly in his right hand when in use; and if the intervals between its use are long, he should place it in a corner or lay it upon a table near him.

When the picture itself contains words that explain it, the pointer should not be used, nor should the speaker talk while the picture is being shown, except in those instances where the wording on the picture itself is not sufficient to explain its full meaning. Only pictures that are apt, attractive and complete should be selected for the illustration of a talk, lecture or address, so that when the picture is shown, it will speak for itself.

### MOTION PICTURES

The motion picture is undoubtedly the most popular and efficient medium for reproducing the happenings of life, and should be used by a speaker, whenever possible, to illustrate, amplify or reinforce the strong points of his talk, lecture or address. The rules heretofore given apply with particular force to the exhibition of motion pictures. In fitting words the speaker should introduce each reel, or portion of the reel dealing with a particular subject, and then he should refrain, as much as possible, from speaking while it is being shown. Apt, explanatory wording should appear on the pictures themselves, so that while they are being shown, they will make a concentrated appeal to the eye alone. Like the stationary one, the motion picture, in most instances, should be employed as *a powerful climax of the speaker's words.*







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